

AVP-AUSTRALIA

NATIONAL

GATHERING 2008

REPORT

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	2
2. Business Meeting Decisions	3
3. Report from AVP session at Quaker Yearly Meeting	4
4. AVP wikis	4
5. Session Summary	5
6. NG'08 Feedback	8
7. Session Schedule for NG'08	attachment

I INTRODUCTION

The 2008 AVP-Australia National Gathering was held at Forest House Public School in Surry Hills, Sydney for two days and one evening from Friday 25 January to Sunday 27 January. The proximity of the venue to Central Station (3 blocks away) was very convenient for everyone. The Gathering was attended by 25 people over the two and a half days with two facilitators from AVP-Q, one facilitator from both AVP-VIC and AVP-Darwin, and the remainder from three AVP(NSW) groups - AVP-Sydney, AVP(NSW) Prisons & Blue Mountains and AVP-ACT.

The Gathering was non-residential with facilitators coming to which-ever full days that were convenient. The Friday informal evening session went from 5:30 pm to 9:00 pm with a dinner, gathering and a report by Aletia of her recent trip to AVP in Kenya.

The two full days on Saturday and Sunday went from 8:30 am to 6:00 pm with both the first and last hours from each day being a 'Happy Hour' for informal sharing, networking and social interaction. There were three sessions on Saturday and four sessions on Sunday providing the opportunity to experience new learning activities, new versions of learning activities and explore facilitation variations. There are brief introductions to these learning activities included in this report. Check out <http://avpmanuals.wikispaces.com> for full descriptions of the learning activities.

The business session was held for an hour and a half on Saturday afternoon. Business Meeting topics were divided into AVP-Australia, AVP-Australia National Gatherings and Communication. One of the issues included looking at ways of strengthening our working together both within Australia and with our regional neighbours. There will be an investigation into the use of conference or skype calls, and extension of invitations to both regional and Australian facilitators to join the wikis and egroups.

The ongoing issue of the AVP-Australia National Gatherings and how we could make future Gatherings more inclusive was discussed. There were recommendations for the setting up of a working group to organise future National Gatherings with representatives from each AVP group and the trialling of a rotation of the National Gathering to all Australian states with the Quaker Yearly Meeting. AVP(NSW) raised the issue of considering offering to host a future AVP International Conference possibly in January 2011 following the Quaker Yearly Meeting in Sydney.

Copies of this and other AVP-Australia National Gathering Reports are available on <http://avpclearinghouse.wikispaces.com>. (username - avpguest & password - affirmation). For more information about how to join this private AVP facilitators wikispace contact Katherine at katherine@transformingconflict.info.

Katherine
AVP (NSW)
26 February 2008

II BUSINESS MEETING 26/1/08

AVP-Australia is recognised as a network of autonomous AVP groups within Australia that have a common heritage, values and philosophy. National Gatherings make recommendations about issues and activities that are common to or affect groups.

1 AVP-AUSTRALIA

1.1 AVP Australia National Contact

- The Business Meeting agreed that Malcolm would continue as the AVP-Australia contact person. He is happy to relinquish this if someone else would like to volunteer.

1.2 Timely Management

- It was agreed to examine conference calls and skype asap as mechanisms to facilitate more frequent discussion between the Australian groups. ACTION Heather co-ordinator
- A working group with representatives from each of the Australian groups would be formed with each group on that working group able to convene a meeting around urgent needs. Sabine has taken the responsibility to contact the groups to get names of representatives. AVP(NSW). ACTION Sabine
- Initial responsibilities - tasks to co-ordinate 2009 National Gathering and AVP-Australia national report for international use including to the 2008 International Gathering. Date for completion March 31 2008 ACTION National Gathering Working Group
- The information that funds are available within the Quaker Peace and Justice Fund. Groups indicated their interest to apply for funds for a variety of AVP purposes. For further information contact Bev AVP-Vic.

1.3 Liaison

- It was agreed to extend invitations to AVP facilitators from PNG, NZ, East Timor and Nepal to join the AVP-AU/AUL egroups. ACTION Katherine.

1.4 Possible future AVP International

- AVP (NSW) will consider an invitation to AVP-I to host the AVP-International Gathering in January 2011.

2 COMMUNICATION - wikis

- Meeting expressed heartfelt thanks to Katherine for the work done on the wikis and endorses their use for AVP facilitators in the region. ACTION: Katherine
- A link will be requested from the AVP-USA website and the AVP-World website to the Australian wikis. ACTION: Katherine.

3 AVP-AUSTRALIA NATIONAL GATHERING

- National working group will decide. The expressed intent was to have the NG'09 in Canberra. David took on the investigation to see if Canberra will host the NG'09 and a request for consideration may be extended to AVP-SA in Jan 2010. ACTION David & National Gathering Working Group

Present 2008

Bev (Vic), Brian (Sydney), David L (ACT), David O (NSW), Heather (Q), John (Sydney), Julie Ann (Sydney), Katherine (Sydney), Laurie (Sydney), Malcolm (Sydney), Michelle (Sydney), Renate (NSW Prisons), Rochelle (NSW), Rollo (ACT), Sabine (NSW Prisons), Terry (Q), Wendy (Sydney)

David, John, Katherine & Malcolm AVP(NSW)
10 February 2008

III REPORT FROM THE AVP SESSION AT THE 2008 QUAKERS YEARLY MEETING

At Yearly Meeting of Quakers, ten AVPers met to discuss and report their work in community and prisons. There was considerable supportive discussion about the need for administrative assistance for prison work. The report to a Yearly Meeting session was well received and discussed.

Sabine AVP Blue Mountains & NSW Prisons

IV AVP WIKIS

Five AVP wikis on www.wikispaces.com have been further developed to facilitate the sharing of information and AVP learning activities between Australian AVP facilitators. Wiki demonstrations were given to those who attended NG'08. Over the next months all AVP-Australia facilitators will be invited to join the wikis. Membership will also be offered to our colleagues in NZ, PNG and Nepal.

The new wikispaces are

- <http://avpactivities.wikispaces.com> - learning activities for AVP facilitators
- <http://avpauclearinghouse.wikispaces.com> - AVP information for AVP facilitators
- <http://avpnswcouncil.wikispaces.com> - AVP NSW Council information
- <http://avpaustralia.wikispaces.com> - public information about AVP in Australia
- <http://transformingconflict.wikispaces.com> - public access to Transforming Conflict learning activities (linked to www.transformingconflict.info)

To use the wikispaces

- Go to one of the web pages address listed above
- Log on with either your own Wikispaces username and password
or - username – avpguest, password - affirmation
- Follow the links or search for your topic
- Look in the Recent Changes 'discussion' section for a list of the recent discussions
- You are invited to add your comments to the discussion option at the top of each page.

To join wikispaces

- Sign in & join with your username & password
- Confirm your email account by replying to the email received from Wikispaces
- Email Katherine to request connection to the wikis you would like to join.

Katherine AVP-Sydney

V NATIONAL GATHERING SESSIONS

FRIDAY NIGHT 25 January 2008	
	Set up [4:00-5:30pm]
	Dinner – shared meal [5:30-7:00pm]
	Singing – including AVP song and folk songs
	Report on Aletia's recent experiences with AVP in Kenya. This included workshops and an evaluation of AVP in Kenya
	Gathering: My name and my AVP experience Too brief
	Community Clean Up
DAY 1 - SATURDAY 26 January 2008	
Preliminary	
	Happy Hour (8:30-9:30am)
	Welcome & Introduction & Housekeeping [9:30-10:00am]
Session 1 Light – AVP(NSW) Prison Group, Sabine & Renate [10:00-11:30am]	
	Welcome: 'Some look at the stars, some see only mud' With this quotation I want to lead into this session based on our work in prisons. Prisoners live in a dark, difficult environment. I see part of our task in AVP is to bring some light into their lives. <i>Brief talk on bringing some light into the darkness of prisons.</i>
	Gathering: My name & some way I could bring some light into someone's life is...
	Light Names <i>Each chose and affirmative light name eg Sunshine Sabine, Radiant Renate</i>
	Empathy Groups <i>Small groups shared a difficulty, chose one and presented it to the whole group who then were supposed to take on the problem as their own, and speaking from the 'I' throw some light onto the issue. Using affirmation, co-operation and conflict transformation. Thought it was not understood clearly, a useful discussion followed in the debrief</i>
	Light and Lively: Pass the ball
	Sculptures: Using TP to transform a situation of conflict to one of peace [not done]
	Review <i>aka Session Reflection</i>
	Closing: Journeying into the light <i>A brief description of a process used with prisoners in a basic when they draw a journey into the future, into the light. Participants at this workshop were only asked to convey in one word a 'light tool' they could use in their journey.</i>
Session 2 Consensus Creativity – AVP-Sydney First Fridays – Transforming Conflict - Brian & Julie Ann, Wendy	
	<i>Before session during break – hand a ribbon of paper & instruction to all participants. Have them create an affirmation blessing as per instruction & hand back before the session starts. Construct a blessing ribbon during the session</i>
	<i>Set up – one area per group (table, chairs & materials needed). Resources needed – poster paper & pens, art paper, pencils & crayons, music, player, ribbon & stapler</i>
	Program [10 mins] <i>Establish groups of 4-5 people. Remain together to maintain group dynamic. Introduce session/program philosophy</i>
	Create [20 mins] <i>As individual groups spend short time in contemplation, brainstorm concept/topic as set – all to participate. Reach</i>

	consensus on approach to be taken. As group create a work of art – all to participate. Come back to the circle & present work
	Conflict [15 mins] <i>Still in the circle undertake instructions as given. Results to be placed on the floor in front of the group. Discuss feelings</i>
	Resolve [20 mins] <i>Back into individual groups. Each group will be given a scenario to reach an agreed solution. Write up recommendation on sheet supplied. Back to circle, present work.</i>
	Transform [15 mins] <i>Back into individual groups, with results from Create and Conflict activities Connect as group then begin healing process. Reassemble work and make good. Back to circle to present work</i>
	Session Reflection
	Affirm [10 mins] <i>All participants form a circle, then participate in the group blessing.</i>
Lunch	[1:15-2:00pm]
Session 3 Check-ins / Body Language / I-messages – David AVP(NSW) [2:00-3:00pm]	
Session 4 Business Meeting [3:30-5:00pm]	
Happy Hour [5:00-6:00pm]	
Dinner at restaurant	
DAY 2 - SUNDAY 30 January 2008	
Preliminary	
	Happy Hour (8:30-9:30am)
Session 5 Needs, Feelings & Positive Feedback - AVP-Sydney – John & others [9:30-11:30am]	
	Welcome & Agenda
	Stretch
	Gathering: My name & what community means to me and why
	Feelings and Needs <i>Inside & Outside activity with feelings on the inside and needs giving rise to the feelings on the outside</i>
	L&L: Hostage
	I-messages Link
	Feedback <i>Look at the issue of feedback</i> 1) Definitions of debriefing – personal reflection at end of activities; Session Reflection – personal responses & reflection of each activity at end of each session; and Feedback – facilitators sharing with each other in privacy of team sessions 2) Role-play of T4F trainee team presentation 3) Trainee team fishbowl – What's on top? etc 4) Modelled facilitators feedback then opened to other to provide feedback 5) Small group discussion about issue 6) Groups reported back to full group
	Session Reflection
	Close
Session 6 Dialogue – AVP-Sydney – Martin [1 hr 20 mins]	
	Welcome

	Introduction of David Bohm and Krishnamurti Dialogue Process <i>1) Guidelines 2) Transformational possibilities posing the questions – Whose AVP is it? Are we supporting a pseudo community? Allowing unresolved 'stuff' to fester amongst facilitator community under a veneer. How are we living the Transforming Power mandala?</i>
	L&L: 4 Up <i>A spontaneous L&L emerged through the process To be added to AVP/HIP Sydney manual. 4 people at a time, no more or no less, stand together, then sit down. Then four stand up again. A combination of the activities 1-10 and Stand Up</i>
	Silence <i>Dialogue ended with a few minutes of silence.</i>
lunch	
Session 7 My Mum My Dad – AVP(NSW) – Allison	
	Affirmation Sound Circle <i>To be added to AVP/HIP Sydney manual. Everyone makes a affirming sound. Listen to the combined sounds</i>
	Hey Mum Hey Dad <i>To be added to AVP/HIP Sydney manual. Now renamed Assertive Responses. Small groups brainstorm verbal responses to a conflict scenario. The responses are ranked 1-10 in order of the most helpful and least helpful of responses. Look at common elements of most helpful responses and write an assertive response.</i>
Session 8 Checkout Question - David (AVP-NSW)	
	Checkout Question – Exploring Assumptions & Misunderstandings <i>Facilitator provided a series of instructions. Each participant was given a piece of A4 paper. Participants followed the instructions about marking and folding their paper. Participants were limited to one question per instruction</i>
Session 9 Gathering Feedback & Close – Sabine (AVP-Blue Mts & Prison)	
	Review of weekend brainstorm & questions & discussion
	Close:
COMMUNITY CLEAN UP	
Dinner at restaurant	

VI GATHERING FEEDBACK

Positive

- Very good administration –thanks, Malcolm, Katherine and Sabine
- New exercises exciting and well thought out
- Martin's session excellent
- Each session got successively deeper
- The exercise in the body was good
- All the right people turned up
- Focus on 'I-Messages' was good – not planned, people grappling
- Brian's Session was imaginative, broadening, innovative
- David's 'dictatorship' session with the folding paper was good.

Suggestions

- Cushions needed
- More structure on Friday night, maybe - gathering, meal, business meeting
- Plan how to build in community building
- More facilitator learning
- Plan for deepening of activities over time
- More representative sessions from different states
- State representatives unsure what will be appropriate,
 - may wish to just experience what is offered by NSW
 - maybe ask facilitators to cover a particular topic
 - themes for gatherings
 - guidelines
- Katherine to publish past Gathering evaluations to avoid repeating mistakes
- Try for less optimistic agenda planning to avoid sense of rushing
- Close sessions then have reflection
- 2.5 days as 1.5 loses time for deepening
- Explore using dialogue as part of workshops re Martin's session
- Keep in mind it is a workshop for facilitators – useful learning, discussion of issues
- Put up a sheet for unresolved issues
- Explore a way of keeping in communication after the NG – Wiki?
- Find optimum time
- What is our relation to YM? – Are people workshopped out?
- Explore having AVP NG after YM – possibly Canberra in 2009
- We need more L&Ls
- Allocate time to communication issues
- Streaming?

From brainstorm. Sabine (AVP Blue Mountains)

- Have a session framework/template distributed to potential presenters before the Gathering – include welcome, L&Ls, Session Feedback and Close
- Need extra time for each morning to open the day – Opening, Gathering, Agenda, Affirmation Names, Housekeeping
- Need to have Care Bears from all states
- Have Happy Hour from 8:00 to 9:00 & introduction session 9:00-9:30pm.